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Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

SAB-01 SAM-01 ACDA-07 IO-13 EUR-12 /092 W
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R 151305Z JUL 76
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1134
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY AMMAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 6268

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PFOR, LE, SY, EG
SUBJECT: VIEWS OF NATIONAL UNITY FRONT SPOKESMAN

REF: BEIRUT 5829

1. SUMMARY: MARONITE DEPUTY DAHER, SPOKESMAN FOR NATIONAL UNITY FRONT (NUF), BELIEVES: 1) THAT 1969 CAIRO ACCORD CAN SERVE AS BASIS FOR SYRIA-PALESTINE AGREEMENT; 2) SECURITY CAN EFFECTIVELY BE RESTORED TO LEBANON IN WAKE OF CEASEFIRE; 3) SYRIANS WOULD BE HESTITANT TO ATTACK WEST BEIRUT; AND 4) US ROLE SHOULD BE ONE OF PRESSURING SYRIA TO FIND ACCOMMODATION WITH PLO. END SUMMARY.

2. MARONITE DEPUTY FROM THE AKKAR, MICHEL DAHER, WHO IS SPOKESMAN FOR NUF, PAID CALL ON ME JULY 14.

3. NUF PROGRAM. DAHER DESCRIBED NUF AS ALLIANCE OF LEADING LEBANESE CHRISTIANS AND MOSLEMS WHO HAVE NOT TAKEN SIDES IN CIVIL WAR. NUF PROGRAM IS NOT DETAILED OR EXTENSIVE BUT RATHER IS FOCUSSED ON KEY IMMEDIATE ISSUES: 1) PRESERVATIONOF LEBANESE TERRITORIAL AND HUMAN UNITY;
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2) SYRIAN WITHDRAWAL; 3) RESPECT FOR CAIRO ACCORDS ON

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PALESTINIAN STATUS -- PRINCIPLES HE BELIVES ARE WIDELY
ACCEPTED BY WARRING PARTIES. CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTION
IS NOT IMMEDIATE NUF CONCERN, BUT NUF POSITION IS
GENERALLY, IF NOT ENTIRELY, IN SUPPORT OF FRANGIE'S
PROPOSALS, BUT THEY SHOULD BE SUBMITTED TO PARLIAMENT
FOR APPROVAL. NUF IS OPPOSED TO ANY FORM OF
CONFESSIONALISM OR DISCRIMINATION AGAINST ANY GROUP.

4. CAIRO ACCORD. DAHER CLAIMED ARAFAT AND SYRIANS ARE
READY TO ACCEPT 1969 CAIRO ACCORD, AND AT NUF MEETING
JULY 13, MOSLEM LEADERS KARAME AND SALAM SPOKELIN FAVOR
H
OF RETURN TO THIS ACCORD. NUF IS NOW TRYING TO
PERSUADE KFOUR FRONT THAT ONLY MARONITE REJECTION
OF CAIRO ACCORD PREVENTS AN AGREEMENT. ALTHOUGH
ACKNOWLEDGING THAT MARONITES' RECENT VICTORY AT TELL
ZAATAR AND THEIR BURNING DESIRE TO CARRY FIGHT TO PPS
AND JUNBLATT ADHERENTS ARE OBSTACLES, NUF HOPES THAT SYRIA WILL
PRESSURE ITS CHRISTIAN ALLIES TO ACCEPT ACCORDS.
DAHER LBAIMED FRANGIE FOR CONTRIBUTING TO PALESTINIAN
DIFFICULTY BY ENCOURAGING ARAFAT IN 1973 TO LOOK TO HIS
OWN DEFENSE BECAUSE LEBANESE COULD NOT PROTECT
PALESTINIANS FROM ISRAELIS.

5. SECURITY. DAHER BELIVES THAT THE ARAB LEAGUE
FORCES, WHO ARE BASICALLY ACCEPTABLE TO ALL PARTIES,
CAN AND SHOULD ENFORCE SECURITY IN LEBANON AFTER A
CEASEFIRE. HE AGREED THAT ARAB FORCE WILL NEED HEAVY
ARMAMENT. HE IS ALSO CONFIDENT THAT REGULAR LEBANESE
ARMY CAN BE QUICKLY RECONSTITUTED, EVEN WITHIN FEW
WEEKS, ONCE GENERAL SOLUTION IS FOUND. MOST
PROFESSIONAL OFFICERS AND SOLIDERS, HE BELIVES, HAVE
STAYED OUT OF CIVIL WAR. ALREADY IN WEST BEIRUT,
CONTINUED DAHER, ARAFAT HAD AGREED THAT PLO SHOULD TURN
OVER ADMINISTRATION OF WEST BEIRUT TO LEBANESE
AUTHORITES. RE LOCAL SECURITYN, NUF HAS ALREADY
ISSUED APPEAL TO REGULAR GENDARMERIE TO RESUME DUTIES.

6. POSSIBLE SYRIAN ASSAULT OF WEST BEIRUT. NDAHER
SAID SYRIA IS TIRED OF THIS WAR, WHICH IS VERY
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EXPENSIVE, AND IT IS POSSIBLE THAT SYRIA IS PREPARED
TO MEET ARAFAT HALF-WAY. HE THOUGHT THAT SYRIANS WOULD
HESITATE BEFORE CONTEMPLATING ATTACK ON WEST BEIRUT
BECAUSE THEY WOULD FIND SUCH AN EFFORT EXTREMELY
DIFFICULT AND COSTLY.

7. US ROLE. DAHER THOUGHT US COULD NOT GET INVOLVED
DIRECTLY AMONG WARRING LEBANESE PARTIES, BUT COULD

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PLAY USEFUL OUTSIDE ROLE. HE THOUGHT MOST USEFUL US
ROLE AT PRESENT MOMENT WOULD BE TO PRESSURE SYRIA TO
FIND AQCOMMODATION WITH PALESTINIANS. HE COULD
APPROACH THIS TASK INDIERECTLY, IF NEED BE, THROUGH
THIRD PARTIES SUCH AS EGYPT AND SAUDI ARABIA.

8. COMMENT: NUF PROGRAM APPEARS REASONABLE AND
PRAGMATIC AT FACE VALUE, BUT NUF HAS LITTLE POWER TO
SHAPE EVENTS.WHAT NUF PROGRAM CAN DO, PERHAPS, IS
TO UNDERLINE CONCEPTUALFRAMEWORK FOR FUTURE AGREEMENT.
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